



Bioterrorism

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- # Bioterrorism is a significant public health threat facing the United States.
- # Response to a bioterrorism event will require rapid deployment of scarce public health resources.
- # The nation's public health infrastructure currently is not adequate to detect and respond to a bioterrorist event.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC established a Bioterrorism Program to ensure the rapid development of federal, state, and local capacity to address potential bioterrorism events. The program integrates planning and training to facilitate the development of core competencies and capacities in the primary elements of public health preparedness, including surveillance, epidemiology, rapid laboratory diagnosis, emergency response, and information systems.

Example of program in action: CDC has started a cooperative agreement program for state and major local public health departments to help improve their preparedness and response capabilities for bioterrorism. CDC has identified the biological agents most likely to be involved in a terrorist attack and developed case definitions to assist in detection and medical management of infection with these agents. CDC has established a Rapid Response and Advanced Technology laboratory that can provide rapid identification of biological and chemical agents that are rarely seen in the United States. The newly established National Pharmaceutical Stockpile Program will allow caches of medical materiel located throughout the nation to be on site within 12 hours of a bioterrorist event. A nationwide, integrated information, communications, and training network, being developed through the Health Alert Network (HAN), National Electronic Data Surveillance System (NEDSS), and Epidemic Information Exchange (*Epi-X*), will include the integration of several CDC efforts. The network will allow high-speed Internet communications, including early-warning broadcast alerts, among CDC and state and local health departments.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC and state and local health departments will:

- # Continue to enhance public health infrastructure;
- # Continue to develop response capacity;
- # Provide training in bioterrorism preparedness and response for the public health workforce;
- # Continue to enhance the pharmaceutical stockpile and information systems.

For more information on this and other CDC programs, visit www.cdc.gov/programs.

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